The dL STAR

Supporting Training Awareness and Readiness

Leadership Intro

Welcome to the fifth edition of the dL Star! This is the time of year that Army Training Support Center (ATSC) gears up for the Annual dL Workshop in Williamsburg. This year's theme is "Blurring the Lines Between Operational and Institutional Environments," and will take place 10-14 Mar 2008 at the Marriott hotel in Williamsburg, VA. The venue will also host the annual dL Courseware Prioritization Workshop which is by email invitation only. For more information on the workshop see the article on page 2.

The TRADOC G-3/5/7 has been reorganized into new directorates and divisions. Training Development And Delivery Directorate (TDADD) has been redesignated Distributed Learning and Advanced Education Technologies Directorate (DL&AETD). The reorganization will not affect how we conduct business for the distributed Learning Community, it will enhance the way we conduct business. Questions regarding the reorganization should be sent to the dL email address below.

We have received an immense amount of feedback on the dL Star from the field and dL training community. Our subscriber list grows with each publication. If you know of a Soldier or someone who would benefit from receiving the dL Star encourage them to subscribe. For questions on dL or to share a good news dL story, contact our team at: distributed.learning@us.army.mil. We are here to serve you!

COL James Markley
TRADOC Capabilities Manager (TCM) TADLP

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84th Army Reserve Readiness Training Center (AARTC) Courseware on the ALMS

In accordance with ALARACT 126/2007, 84th ARRTC of Fort McCoy, WI has transitioned their dL content from the LMS they had been using to the ALMS, providing 38 common courses such as: Battle Focused Training, Mine Awareness, Army Oil Analysis Program, Drivers Licensing, Anti-Fratricide, EEO for Supervisors and Managers, Family Readiness Training, Mine Awareness, OPSEC, SAEDA, Code of Conduct, Force Protection, etc. All 38 courses are now available for registration via the ALMS https://www.lms.army.mil/DLS.

If you are interested in loading your training courseware onto the ALMS, contact Mr. Glenn Maravillas at glenn.maravillas@us.army.mil.

Annual Distributed Learning (dL) Workshop, 10-13 Mar 2008

Headquarters Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) in conjunction with the Army Training Support Center (ATSC) will host its Annual dL Workshop at the Williamsburg Marriott Hotel, in Williamsburg, VA from10-13 Mar 08.

With this years theme "Blurring the Lines Between Operational and Institutional Environments," ATSC anticipates appearances from senior leaders, to include leaders representing Joint Forces Command, Department of the Army, proponent schools, sister services, and other governmental agencies. The workshop's goal is to focus on best practices for leveraging knowledge from subject matter experts in the operational environment, rapid integration of lessons learned into our education and training programs, and developing distributed Learning products that meet the needs of both environments.

Two awards will be presented at the workshop, the "TRADOC-wide dL Maverick Award," and the "dL Champion Award" to the school that has exhibited superior performance in advancing dL. For more information on the workshop, agenda, and award nomination, visit: www.atsc.army.mil/itsd/dlws/DLWorkshop.asp.

Registration will open 7 Jan 08 via the dL Workshop Web site at www.atsc.army.mil/itsd/dlws/DLRegistration.asp. For those not registering online, registration packets will be available at the sign-in table the day of the conference. Government personnel have first priority as attendees.

The Williamsburg Marriott Hotel www.williamsburgmarriott.com/ has rooms available for $70 per day under the group code "ATSATSA." When making reservations place the group code in the "special rate" block. Each attendee is responsible for their reservations.

dL Training: During the Duty Day and at Home

As dL becomes more popular in training Soldiers and units, there has been some misconception as to when Soldiers can train during the duty day and whether Soldiers should train on their own time. ALARACT 034/2006 was distributed in 2006 clarifying dL training, when Soldiers (AC and RC) can train during the duty day, and what role Commanders play in dL training for their Soldiers. When it comes to Soldiers' training activities, all training is at the discretion of the Commander; however, units supporting an Army at War can save time and money by training Soldiers via dL. DL training can keep Soldiers at home station thus saving critical time with families, and save money on deploying units.

The key to incorporating dL training during the duty day is for Commanders to fence time to allow Soldiers to attend dL training in dL facilities (such as Digital Training Facilities); students' homes and offices are also considered dL facilities when they are engaged in dL activities. ALARACT 034/2006 (which provides policy for implementation of distributed Learning in the Army) states that for Active Duty Soldiers 'unit Commanders support attendance of their Soldiers during the duty day at DA directed and quota managed dL courses, and ensures that Soldiers receive timely notification and administrative instructions associated with attending dL courses; and for Active component Soldiers, the duty day for a DA

directed, quota managed, and directed self-development Asynchronous dL attendance is defined as 0900-1700 Monday through Friday. The duty day for Synchronous dL attendance is defined by the class schedule in ATRRS'. Thus dL exists as a cost-effective and flexible method to train Soldiers without encroaching on their personal time.

To read the full ALARACT 034/2006 message visit:
www.tradoc.army.mil/tadlp/documents/ALARACT034.pdf

Training Development

Task-based Training

Performing Individual combat critical tasks to standard

The intent of this article is to remind the Soldier Training Community that our mission is to: Train Soldiers and leaders to perform their individual combat critical tasks to standard.

Task based Soldier training was formalized in the mid 1970s with publication of Soldier's Manuals, i.e., Soldier Training Products. These manuals contained the individual Soldier combat critical tasks by MOS and skill level to include the conditions and standards to which they were to be trained. Soldier tasks were derived from the collective tasks contained in the Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) documents. This established a closed loop between the Soldier and the unit in which he/she would serve. Soldier's Manuals became the baseline for Soldier training in both the operational and institutional training domains.

The *Army Training Strategy, Strategic Training Guidance*, dated 26 July 2006, directed TRADOC to refocus institutional training on supporting ARFORGEN Reset/Train Forces. This brings us full circle – from the current predominate posture of building institutional training courseware – to building Soldier training products appropriate for both the operational and institutional environment. The common denominator for Soldier training product development is individual critical combat tasks, conditions and standards.

The Warrior Core Tasks and Battle Drills developed by the Chief of Staff, Army are an exemplary model of how we should think when we design and develop task based training products.

The basic tenets are: Shoot, Move, Communicate, and Fight — i.e., move under direct fire, react to indirect fire (dismounted & mounted), perform first aid for open wound (abdominal, chest, & head), evaluate casualty. This is how unit commanders think! It is how we should think!

Many new initiatives are 'under study' to improve our training development capabilities. For example, The Army Performance Improvement Model that proposes to balance industry and military models with Army culture and requirements. This appears to be a step in the right direction. It asks and answers important questions pertinent to Soldier training in the unit. However, our greatest enemy is over complicating development processes that overwhelm our training development capability to execute. The current distributed Learning training development process is an example of this dynamic.
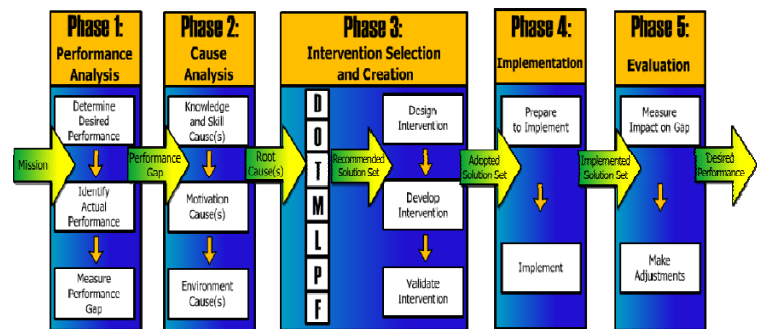
The following considerations are provided for all who are involved in developing ways to improve Soldier training. The intent is to sharpen our focus on what the Soldier needs to fight, win and survive – and to resist losing that focus by allowing the "intricacies of academic process development" to become the dominate player, rather than the Soldier.

- First and foremost, the TADLP focus is Soldier training in the unit for ARFORGEN Reset/Train units.
- Soldier training will be supported by task based training products consisting of critical individual combat tasks that support the COE. The tasks will be posted on a common data base for access by Soldiers and their leaders when and where needed. The tasks will be listed by:
    1. MOS and skill level IAW STP format
    2. Common tasks
    3. Operational tasks and Skill Sets similar to the CSA Warfighter tasks and Battle Drills that address COE feedback.

- Soldiers and Leaders in units will be instructed to use the tasks and skill sets as appropriate for their particular training requirements. DL courseware as currently developed is not required. A credible task analysis will result in tasks being designed and displayed in the order they should be trained.
- The predominance of institutional training will also be based on the same critical individual combat tasks as dL. There must be a direct relationship between what we provide for the operational and institutional training domains.
- Last, it is imperative to reduce the time between when a training requirement is identified and task based training products are in the hands of Soldiers in operational units. Three to six months is the goal. Individual tasks will be made available for Soldier training as soon as the Commandant OKs them for training. Task based training development should go a long ways toward reducing response time.

Distributed Learning (dL) Program Sustainment

Sustainment of the dL program in an organization requires that attention be given to:

- Updating courseware and simulations
- Maintaining and upgrading the facilities and communications infrastructure
- Adding new technology
- Restocking training materials
- Developing new courseware
- Adjusting for Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) requirements

Updating Courseware and Simulations

Life-cycle management must be integrated into our scheduled activities and into contracts. The development of strategies to address the legacy systems that do not have any life-cycle support must also be given more attention. This encompasses prioritizing legacy systems to be updated in the event that funds become available. The development and distribution of resources in-house to extend the life cycle of legacy system also has to be considered. The capacity to make upgrades to courseware and simulations that are within the range of our training developers and others must be examined. All upgrades to IMI do not require large expenditures of funds. It does require that a baseline of skills and equipment be established and maintained for the workforce.

Maintaining and Upgrading Facilities and the Communications Infrastructure

The maintenance and upgrades of Classroom XXI facilities, Digital Training Facilities (DTF), and Life Long Learning Centers (LLC) are borne primarily by TRADOC. These facilities are only a small part of the facilities and communications infrastructure. Consideration must be made for regular classrooms, workspaces, living areas, other facilities, and communication infrastructures that impact the ability of Soldiers and Civilians to maximize their use of dL resources on a wider scale. This falls into the realm of local responsibility. This is an area that we often see a hodge-podge of activity that is not coordinated. A preferred approach is the development of an integrated plan that is synchronized with our training cycles, building upgrades, and new construction.

Adding New Technology

Technology is the driving force in a number of areas. A multiplier of technology is the innovation initiated by individuals. A thorough assessment of needs must be undertaken to get the most out of current and future investments. This also necessitates in-depth examinations of the capabilities of old and new equipment. Training the workforce to use new technology coupled with the introduction of new processes is required. You are still at square one if you fail to introduce process and performance improvements. Greater Returns on Investments (ROI) must be the goal.

Restocking Training Materials

The development and upgrading of training materials requires that a simultaneous examination is conducted of the resources that support the training and learning process. Outdated materials residing in warehouses, repositories, and posted on the web must be upgraded or taken out of the system. In extreme cases, old materials may continue to be used because this is all that is available to instructors and training developers. Ownership for training materials needs to be firmly established. Repositories must be policed up on a regular basis.

Developing New IMI Courseware

The prospect of developing new IMI courseware should be approached in a pragmatic and practical manner. A key consideration in undertaking new IMI courseware development is ROI. It is critical that the returns exceed   the investment. You can help yourself in this area by conducting needs analysis focused on the need for the new IMI courseware you think is needed. It is possible that the needs analysis may reveal that the answer to your training challenge may be something other than training. It is essential that all users of the current product be surveyed to get their input. A needs analysis provides you with a

complete understanding of the shortcomings of the system.

While a task analysis looks strictly at the tasks performed on the job, a needs analysis looks not only at the tasks being performed, but also at other parts of the system. This high level look has the potential to yield clues as to what else might be done to improve task performance besides training. Depending on your goals, you might perform a needs assessment, a task analysis, or a combination of the two.

There are two main methods to discover training needs. The first method takes the proactive approach. This is when a training analyst goes into the system or process and searches for problems or potential problems. The goal is to make the system more efficient and to prevent future problems from occurring. The second method is when an organization, supervisor, or instructor needs help in fixing a problem. These problems are usually caused by new operating environments, changes, or the introduction of new technologies.

Training developers, instructors, and training departments must act rapidly when problems arise that might require a training solution. The ability of the organization to accomplish its mission could be in jeopardy. First, investigate the problem. A training need exists when an individual lacks the knowledge or skill to perform an assigned task satisfactorily. It arises when there is a gap between what the individual is expected to do on the job and what the actual job performance is. To decide if training is the answer, one basic question needs to be asked, "Does the individual being trained know how to meet the required performance standards for a task?" If the answer is "No," then training is needed. If the answer is "Yes" then another action, besides training, is needed. Some of these other actions might be counseling, job redesign, equipment redesign, or organizational development.

Questions that need to be answered in the needs analysis:
- Why do you need the training product?
- When do you need the training product?
- Who will be trained and how many?
- Where are you experiencing challenges in the performance of the equipment?
- Have you prioritized the need for this IMI product against other needs?
- What are the needs of your target audience?
- How are you meeting the current training needs?
- What are the shortfalls of the current training method?
- What innovations can you develop to meet some of the shortfalls?

- What is the life cycle of the equipment that is associated with this training product?
- Where do you plan to get the money to develop and sustain the IMI courseware?

You can also help yourself by developing a storyboard for the IMI product that you envision. The storyboard should incorporate the flow and functionality you desire in the product. Presentation software such as PowerPoint can be helpful in developing the storyboard for the proposed product. Your storyboard should be a map outlining all the major steps needed to complete the learning objectives for the proposed IMI courseware or training product. It should also contain enough information that a development team can move forward with laying out the basic structure for the IMI product. You are behind the eight ball if you go into a post award for a contract and do not have a storyboard.

Adjusting for ARFORGEN Requirements

The goal of ARFORGEN is to achieve a sustained, more predictable posture to generate trained and ready modular forces. A training center's role in providing training to the Army's Reserve Component and Active Component can make adjusting for force generation requirements a complex venture. The ante can easily be upped when the provision of training for other services is thrown into the mix. Operational requirements drive the ARFORGEN training and readiness process. There are a variety of factors that can impact requirements.

ARFORGEN challenges:
- Technological shifts
- Meeting force requirements
- Operational tempo (OPTEMPO) needs
- Cross-leveling
- Attrition in the training base
- Restructuring force configurations
- Modification of operational cycles
- Changes in strategy and tactics
- Needs of other services

Maintaining timely and regular communications with everyone who has requirements is a key part of the process. Monitoring the ability of each service to meet its recruiting and retention goals is necessary. The ability of the training base to provide information and products to support knowledge needs and training needs is a strategic role that must be acknowledged. Distributed learning is a definite complement to many of the individual and unit training issues created by the challenges of ARFORGEN.

Challenges

The sustainment of dL is challenged by:

- Funding
- Integrating training needs in the procurement process
- Life-cycle management
- Business processes
- Advancements in technology
- Systems architecture
- Systems integration

Ways to address the challenges affecting the sustainment of dL:

- Develop a portfolio of all IMI products that have been developed and are being developed
- Perform a needs assessment for the training product
- Plan for multiple uses of IMI products
- Prioritize IMI product development
- Explore less expensive options to support the training need
- Engage users and training personnel early in the development process
- Stay abreast of advancements in technology
- Simultaneously crosswalk activities with all parties that influence the success of the product
- Develop some capacity in-house to modify and develop IMI products using best of breed authoring tools and associated software
- Maintain a continuous dialog with the users of training products
- Examine the business needs for the training product
- Develop details as to how life-cycle management will be accomplished
- Put sustainment needs into the budgeting process!

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Soldier's Corner

Blackboard Joins the ALMS

PM DLS and TRADOC are currently developing a capability that will increase the training tools available to users of the Army Learning Management System (ALMS). Together, they are planning to implement data exchanges between the ALMS and TRADOC's Enterprise Blackboard application. This will augment the ALMS's existing array of training delivery types, provided by Saba Learning, with an asynchronous instructor-student interactive environment, provided by the Blackboard Learning System. The result will be an "interface" between these systems that will provide to the trainer and learner key training features available from each system. Phased development is underway that will enable the inter-system data exchanges in increments of increasing capability or development-test-release "spirals." Although planners envision a very tight integration of the applications eventually, the initial capability will be comprised of three spirals.

The first of these, currently in the testing phase, provides student registrations in Saba to Blackboard where they are collected in class rosters ready to execute Blackboard-supported training or education. This automated capability will be triggered on demand by class manager/instructors when they want to conduct training in Blackboard. It will execute regardless of how the user registers- either registering for a class occur in the ALMS or registering in the ALMS through an existing interface with the Army Training Requirements and Resources System (ATRRS).

The second spiral will enable the automatic transfer of training results occurring in Blackboard for each student back for storage as transcript data in the ALMS database. If needed, it can also be forwarded to ATRRS as the Army's system of record for training.

The third spiral will allow for the sharing of training events between the two Army Enterprise training applications. Course iterations, or classes, created in Blackboard will be established in Saba and lesson-level events in Saba can be designated for execution in Blackboard. This will allow for the auto-population of spiral 1 registration data from ATRRS into Blackboard without having to manually create the event beforehand.

When implemented, the current development effort will give the ALMS users (within the Blackboard environment) the additional capability of Blackboard-style training and a fully automated connection with ATRRS through the ALMS.

PM DLS and TRADOC plan to release these capability increments sequentially beginning the 2nd quarter of 2008 to selected user groups, with the intent of making the inter-system data exchange capabilities available to all Army training users by 4th quarter 2008.

Electronic Books (Ebooks): Supporting Soldier Education and Training

More than 35,000 Ebook collections are now available for TRADOC Soldiers, Staff & Faculty, Training Developers, and personnel at TRADOC schools. The academic subjects include, education, military, cultural awareness, computer science, leadership, and training. The collection is available via desktop, AKO, or school library at http://site.ebrary.com/lib/tradoc. A smaller collection, specific to adult training and education are on AKO at, https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/345736.

Efforts continue to make AKO the single access point.
POC: Amy Loughran, (757) 788-2155

DLS Digital Training Facility (DTF) Tech Refresh Update

DLS has been working hard on providing technical refresh for our DTFs around the world. By February 2008, 56 sites will be upgraded with new HP 7700 PC/monitors, servers, Lexmark printers, and chairs. Selected sites will also receive new desks, Tandberg VTT upgrades, pull down screens, ceiling mounted projectors, and surveillance cameras.

Beginning in March 2008 DLS will begin another round of refreshes to 37 additional sites that will provide HP 7800 PC/monitors, Tandberg VTT upgrades, pull down screens, ceiling mounted projectors, and surveillance cameras.

If you are a DTF Manager and you have questions regarding tech refresh, contact Junius Penn at junius.penn@us.army.mil.

U.S. Army Provides Military Arabic Version of Rosetta Stone® via Army e-Learning

A new version of Rosetta Stone Arabic has been released for the U.S. Army with a military focus that includes 123 military terms with an emphasis on military language tasks such as talking with civilians at a vehicle checkpoint, reacting to an improvised explosive device (IED) attack, and training allied Soldiers. The new Arabic Military version, available online exclusively, can be accessed via Army e-Learning on the Army Knowledge Online (AKO).

The Army has realized success integrating Rosetta Stone into Army e-Learning. Available since November 2005, 115,000 Soldiers have spent 600,000 hours studying Rosetta Stone's 30 languages. In just the three OIF and OEF related languages (Arabic, Farsi, and Pashto), Soldiers have completed 90,000 hours of language training.

In May 2007 the Army expanded Rosetta Stone options to include a network version for a single language for units deployed to locations with unreliable internet access that could be loaded on the unit's computers.

Twenty units in Iraq and Afghanistan have requested licenses for 300 such computers. The Army also provides access to Rosetta Stone to both Army and non-Army students at all Army schools that include language training as part of the curriculum.

Future dL Technology Initiatives

- **More on eBooks:** Knowledge management is crucial to the effective and efficient transfer of information within an organization. Performance through Learning: Knowledge Management in Practice is part of the Improving Human Performance series. Review this title at NetLibrary https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/345736.

- **Podcasting Pilot:** DA G-6 is providing mobile devices and software for schools interested in experimenting with new delivery methods for courseware. Digital content will be loaded on to mobile devices to provide training just-in-time or remotely. There are still opportunities for schools interested in participating in the pilot.

- If you represent a school and are interested in the Podcasting pilot mentioned above; or to submit suggestions on programs, technologies, or other capabilities that could benefit Army dL, please contact Amy Loughran at amy.loughran@us.army.mil.

The dL STAR wants to hear from you!

Email the dL STAR at distributed.learning@us.army.mil if you would like to be added to our distribution list, if you know someone who would be interested in receiving the dL STAR, or if you have a dL related article or link that you would like to see posted.

Have a question or issue on dL Training? Lost a password?

Contact the Army Training Help Desk (ARHD) at www.tradoc.army.mil/athd.htm for help!!

dL Links

www.tradoc.army.mil/tadlp

www.dls.army.mil

www.us.army.mil , select "My Education"

https://athd.army.mil

Army Training Support Center (ATSC)
www.atsc.army.mil
Soldier Training Homepage
www.train.army.mil

The Army National Guard (ARNG)
www.arng.army.mil/about_us/training/dl/